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Jackson H. Henry

Jackson Fears Soviet Oil Takeover

Sees an Egyptian Role As Surrogate for U.S.

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Convinced that the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan is a prelude to an attempted takeover of the Persian Gulf's vast oil reserves, Sen. Henry Jackson, D-Wash., has urged the Carter administration to issue "immediately . . . a major policy declaration" that the United States "will not permit the Russians to take over the (area's) oil fields, directly or by proxy."

Jackson, at a meeting with reporters yesterday, said the declaration should be coupled with "security arrangements" between the United States and major oil producing countries in the Middle East, particularly Saudi Arabia.

And, he suggested, the agreements should be implemented "by taking advantage of friendly sources in the area" — such as Egypt and Sudan, which account for half the Arab population — to act as military surrogates for the United States.

"We ought to take a leaf out of the Russian book," Jackson said, alluding to Cuban military units that have acted as surrogates for the Soviets in areas near the oil fields and sea lanes, such as the Horn of Africa and South Yemen.

Jackson's point was that the United States should avoid direct confrontation with the Russians and should instead rely on friendly troops from the area.

He said he discussed the surrogate idea yesterday with Egyptian Vice President Hosni Mubarak, who he said agreed with his concept. Jackson said his concept also was endorsed by President Anwar Sadat when they met last July. Jackson said he outlined to Sadat during their meeting a scenario similar to last month's invasion of Afghanistan.

"They (the Egyptians) are willing, with help from the United States, to play this role," Jackson said.

Other measures Jackson suggested as important new foreign policy initiatives included:

- Enactment by Congress early this year of a military draft registration bill that he acknowledged could be

the first step in the resumption of the draft in the United States.

- Increases in U.S. defense spending for both conventional and nuclear weaponry.

- Moves by Congress to strengthen the intelligence powers of the CIA, which were dramatically cut back in the post-Watergate era.

Jackson met — at his request — with reporters at a luncheon arranged by Christian Science Monitor reporter Godfrey Sperling, who usually holds regular breakfast sessions with newsmakers.

The senator, who is known for his hard-line attitudes toward the Soviet Union, did not deny that he was using the forum as an attempt to send a message to the Carter administration.

He pointed out that during the week of the Afghanistan invasion by Soviet troops, which he said he had predicted in 1956, he had "not been invited to any White House briefings or discussions."

Jackson said he views the Russian takeover of Afghanistan as a consequence of the Soviet Union's perception of U.S. weakness. "The Russians," he said, "are clearly testing the wills of the Western powers."

He said he wanted to get his message across because "I'm afraid of this administration, being caught without a policy, may go too far the other way."

"My concern is on the part of this administration to overreact. . . ."

The trouble stems from the decline in U.S. power — "that is the heart of it," he said.

Jackson said he feared "ill-advised, rash moves" by the Carter administration and he painted a bleak scenario for the future.

He said that an area in southern Afghanistan — Baluchistan, which also reaches into Pakistan and Iran — has already been infiltrated by the Russians.

Jackson believes that the Baluchis in Iran, who have been fighting for greater autonomy from the Tehran government, will eventually "invite" the Soviets in, putting the Russians even closer to oil fields that are vital to the West.

Jackson also predicts that the current Iranian government will fall within the next year and that the country will break up into small autonomous regions, giving the Russians an excuse to enter.

Jackson expressed disdain for Carter's economic sanctions against Iran, saying that they would only hasten Iran's disintegration and thus provide a target of opportunity for the Soviet Union.

Jackson said the declaration of policy he is recommending would include involvement by U.S. allies in Western Europe and Japan. But he recommended that the United States go it alone if necessary.

Jackson predicted that Congress this year will, for the first time since the unpopular Vietnam war, turn hawkish and support moves to both shore up U.S. defense and intelligence capabilities.

He said that he has discussed all these issues with Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd and that Byrd has pledged "to do everything he can" to get the country moving to counteract the Russians.